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C O N F I D E N T I A L DHAKA 000909

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/01/2015

TAGS: [PTER](#) [KCRM](#) [PGOV](#) [BG](#)

SUBJECT: BANGLADESH PONDER'S FATE OF ULFA CHIEF

Classified By: P/E Counselor D.C, McCullough, Reason(s): 1.4 (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA)
Secretary General Anup Chetia's seven year prison sentence

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expired on February 25 but he remains in "safe custody," according to Alana Khan, Secretary General of Bangladesh Society for Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR). Khan said that BSEHR petitioned the BDG to grant political asylum to Chetia or to deport him to a safe third country. Since 2003, BDG has maintained it would keep Chetia in "safe custody" at the end of his prison term until a decision is made whether to grant asylum or send him a third country. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (U) Media reports state that Indian officials have formally requested his extradition to India but requests have been denied on the grounds that the two countries do not have an extradition treaty. Chetia could face possible life imprisonment in India if found guilty of alleged crimes of killing, kidnapping and extortion according to reports.

[1](#)3. (U) After his arrest in 1997, Indian national Anup Chetia, aka Golap Baruah, was sentenced to seven years imprisonment for illegally entering Bangladesh, possessing forged Bangladeshi passports, and illegal possession of a satellite phone. During his prison term, according to reports, he has urged BDG to deport him to a neutral country when his sentence expires.

[1](#)4. (C) Khan told poloff that with the filing of the writ petitions requesting political asylum and continued "safe custody", BSEHR does not expect Chetia to be released from prison until the BDG or another country decides to grant political asylum. She admitted that neither Chetia nor BSEHR has filed for political asylum in any other country.

[1](#)5. (C) When asked the basis for Chetia's extradition, Indian political officer in Dhaka was unable to state any of Chetia's alleged crimes beyond saying that he has committed a number of crimes. In response to whether India has formally requested extradition, Indian poloff said, "We have wanted him for some time."

6.(C) Comment: Especially in today's chilled Indo-Bangladesh climate, it seems inconceivable that the BDG would return Chetia to India. End Comment.

THOMAS